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**United States  
Department of  
Agriculture**

**Agricultural  
Marketing  
Service**

**Science & Technology  
Program**

# **Pesticide Data Program**

**August 2014**

## **WHAT IS THE PESTICIDE DATA PROGRAM?**

The Pesticide Data Program (PDP) was established in 1991 as part of a USDA-wide food safety initiative. Using the most current laboratory methods, PDP has tested both fresh and processed fruit and vegetables, grains, dairy, meat, poultry, drinking water, and other specialty commodities such as honey, corn syrup, infant formula, fish, and nuts for pesticide residues. Organic fruit and vegetables are also selected for testing. PDP primarily focuses on foods consumed by infants and children. As required by the 1996 Food Quality Protection Act, PDP provides critical, realistic pesticide residue data for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to use in assessing dietary exposures to pesticides. The pesticides and commodities to be included each year in the program are selected based on EPA data needs and take into account the types and amounts of food consumed by children and infants.

## **WHERE AND HOW ARE SAMPLES COLLECTED?**

Samples for PDP testing are collected by trained personnel employing statistically reliable methods designed for each commodity, which assures the data are representative of dietary exposure to pesticide residues in the U.S. diet. Fruit, vegetable, dairy, and specialty product samples collected by participating States are apportioned according to that State's population. Samples are randomly selected from terminal markets and large distribution centers. Sampling at these locations assures the residue measurements include pesticides applied during crop production and those applied after harvest (such as fungicides and growth regulators). Meat/poultry and grain samples are collected directly from slaughter facilities and grain carriers, respectively.

Participation as a PDP sampling site is voluntary, which sets it apart from State and Federal enforcement programs. Approximately 600 sites grant access and provide information, including site volume data, to sample collectors. Detailed standard operating procedures provide criteria for site selection and specific instructions for sample selection, shipping and handling, and chain-of-custody.

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## WHO MANAGES PDP?

The Monitoring Programs Division (MPD), within USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS), directs and oversees sample collection, sample analysis, quality assurance, and database management. MPD develops its planning and policy requirements in coordination with EPA and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Sampling and/or laboratory analyses are performed through cooperative agreements with State and Federal laboratories (see back panel).

## HOW ARE SAMPLES ANALYZED?

All PDP laboratories have achieved International Organization for Standardization (ISO) 17025 Accreditation and are equipped with instrumentation capable of detecting residues at very low levels. Laboratory chemists receive intensive training and must demonstrate analytical proficiency on an ongoing basis. Approximately 420 pesticides and their metabolites, degradates, and isomers are analyzed using multiresidue methods. Occasionally, at EPA's request, single analyte residue methods are used to test for specific pesticides of concern. Approximately 10,000 samples are collected and tested each year.

## WHAT INFORMATION IS COLLECTED AND HOW IS IT USED?

PDP maintains an electronic database that includes product information (such as grower, packer, distributor, and country of origin), residue findings, and process control recoveries for each sample analyzed, in addition to quality assurance/quality control fortified recoveries for each set of samples. USDA prepares annual summaries of the PDP data that are available on the PDP Website or by contacting MPD (see back panel). In addition to EPA, PDP data are used by FDA, academic institutions, food producers, chemical manufacturers, environmental interest groups, and food safety organizations to examine pesticide residue issues that may affect agricultural practices and domestic and international trade.



## PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS

### Federal

- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA)
- USDA Agricultural Marketing Service
  - Science & Technology Program, Monitoring Programs Division
  - Science & Technology Program, National Science Laboratory
- USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service
- USDA Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration
- USDA Office of Pest Management Policy
- USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service

### State

- California Dept. of Food and Agriculture
- California Dept. of Pesticide Regulation
- Colorado Dept. of Agriculture
- Florida Dept. of Agriculture and Consumer Services
- Maryland Dept. of Agriculture
- Michigan Dept. of Agriculture and Rural Development
- New York Dept. of Agriculture and Markets
- North Carolina Dept. of Agriculture & Consumer Services
- Ohio Dept. of Agriculture
- Texas Dept. of Agriculture
- Washington State Dept. of Agriculture
- Wisconsin Dept. of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection

## CONTACT INFORMATION

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## PDP on the Web:

<http://www.ams.usda.gov/pdp>

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